

DAWN

November 1990

Vol 2 No. 21

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DAWN

News Bulletin

Published by the

ALL BURMA STUDENTS' DEMOCRATIC FRONT



UN Special Envoy Probes Human Rights Abuses in Burma

Playing Hide-&-Seek With Truth

Professor Sadako Ogata, a special envoy of the United Nations Human Rights Commission, recently visited Burma to investigate human rights abuses. How successful was the envoy in digging out the truth? Not much, if she has to rely on the generosity of the military junta to make her investigation.

Reports from Burma say she was taken away from the Inya Lake Hotel to the well-guarded State Guest House and the gesture had nothing to do with the junta's hospitality. The junta simply wanted to keep the people away from the UN envoy. Professor Ogata was reported to have passed on her complaints to UN officials because the military junta had deliberately been obstructing her inquiry.

Such reports only compound our concern because we, as do the international community, want the truth to be revealed. Some representatives of human rights groups have already expressed little confidence in the envoy's visit. Citing a similar case in the Persian Gulf some years ago, they argue that a report on human rights abuses prepared by the United Nations usually end up as a watered down version.

International media reports indicate that the professor is very strict and businesslike in her inquiries and we have complete faith in her. But our concern is not her integrity but whether enough opportunities were made available to her. During her visit, while the Burmese media run by the junta harp on how Prof Ogata should investigate British and Japanese wartime crimes in Burma, meetings were only arranged for her with ministers and government officials. She was also taken on a guided tour around the gilded parts of Rangoon city and the new satellite towns where people were resettled and public servants given land. Prof Ogata however would not have known that many of the people moved there already had homes in the inner city limits and that they had been forced to move out.

In light of the situation in Burma, we believe the professor should not confine her inquiries to Burma alone and should approach Burmese communities outside the country if justice is to be done for the Burmese people.

"Dawn" P.O. Box 1352, Bangkok, Thailand

Thai Govt Asked to Reconsider Policy on Burma

In a Buddhist country such as Burma, when Buddhist monks become the subject of political harassment by the authorities, something is very wrong. In the past week, the

State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC) raided Mandalay, Buddhist monasteries and ransacked offices of the National League for Democracy (NLD), the country's largest political party, and the New Society for Democracy Party, in its toughest crackdown since May.

A number of monks, students and activists were arrested as the systematic crackdown of the pro-democracy movement continues unabated.

Since the government began its crackdown in 1988 under the pretext of maintaining "law and order", the Thai government, with the key backing of the Thai military, has given strong support and legitimacy to the Burmese

junta under the leadership of Gen Saw Maung in complete ignorance of the "democracy forces" inside the country.

This, particularly after the landslide victory of the NLD

THE NATION:
October 29, 1990
(Bangkok)

in the May election when the government's candidates were completely routed. The NLD captured 396 of the total 495 seats in the People's Assembly.

Exactly five months have elapsed and the Burmese military junta still shows no sign of giving up the power it wields through the barrel of the gun to enable the NLD to set a new democratic government. The junta has

said that a new constitution must be approved by the military and that the new government must be a strong one before it will transfer power.

Instead, the military continues its raids on the opposition and has opened up a new target in its actions to keep what it calls a semblance of stability in the country - several revered Buddhist monks have been arrested for "instigation and attempts to overthrow the government".

Earlier, the monks refused religious ceremonies for the military which had upset them. In Thailand, if such a thing happened, it would be a national disgrace. The attack on the Buddhist clergy is the most visible indicator of how the military strongmen in Rangoon have treated their people and spiritual leaders. It is very clear the current government is attempting a whitewash.

To convince the public of the need for such an atrocity, the military has resurrected the spectre of the Burmese Communist party (BCP) and accused the monks and the NLD of coercing with a party that is powerless and which has been in a shambles since

WORLD OPINION:

the breakaway of certain young factions who rebelled against the old standing order.

According to the latest report of Asia Watch, a human rights organization, more than 10,000 people have been arrested since August, 1988, together with a number of reported cases of students being tortured imprisoned. SLORC's iron fist still dominates the country through martial law, forbidding any meeting of more than four people. What should Thailand do in response to this increased suppression of democratic expression of its neighbour? Should our officials act dumb and just wait? For what? More suppression? If the Thai leadership really cares, there are some things Thailand can do.

Firstly, it is about time that the Thai authorities concerned, especially the security officials and military circles, review the current policy toward Burma and whether the status quo makes sense at all. Thailand has turned a blind eye to the human rights violations committed by the junta because it is attempting to use Burma as a tool for its own economic interest.

When Gen Chavalit Yongchaiyudh was a Cabinet

member in the Chatichi government, serving as a deputy prime minister, he was the lynchpin of Thailand's policy on Burma. In pushing Burmese refugees, mainly students who sought sanctuary in our territory after the military so brutally quashed the demonstrations, back across the border. Even though he is now an outsider, Chavalit remains a significant and influential figure as far as the current

by

Kavi Chongkittavorn

Burmese leadership is concerned. It came as no surprise that recently Chavalit told reporters that he would visit Rangoon and urge Gen Saw Maung to release Aung San Suu Kyi, the charismatic opposition leader, who has been under house arrest since June, 1989.

In the end, the government should let the junta know that further democratic suppression would not be tolerated — Burma's military and police forces should instead concentrate on drug suppression — otherwise future collaboration with Thailand would become more difficult. The situation in Burma could also become a part of the fickleness of Thai politics.

Secondly, the government must establish contacts with

the opposition which represents democracy in Burma, without delay. To obtain the real political picture in Burma, Thailand cannot overlook the opposition. Ignoring the democratic forces would have far-reaching consequences. It is tantamount to ignoring the spoken word of the public.

The failure would translate into animosity among the future generations of Burma who are being raised under the horror rule of the junta with the consent of the Thai government.

Thai authorities have so far shunned the opposition. The Thai diplomatic corps in Rangoon is reluctant to get acquainted with them fearing that such an action would jeopardize ties with the military junta — especially at a time when the military is harassing certain diplomats from other countries.

When Chavalit was the army chief, he singularly handled Burmese affairs, establishing a personal rapport with the Burmese leadership in the lead-up to the international isolation of Burma in the wake of its bloody crackdown. On top of this policy, it is a open secret that Thailand has a gargantuan vested interest in the logging, gems and fishing industries of Burma. Thailand's economic interest in

WORLD OPINION:

Burma has been doubly fortified because of the imposition of the logging ban last year by the Chatichi government and dwindling natural resources due to unbridled exploitation.

At the moment, there is strong feeling here among policymakers in the Thai security apparatus that the military junta will not give up its current to the opposition, which is considers a "enemy" and "communist aspirants", despite continued international effort to pressure it to loosen its grip on the populace and allow the democratic process to take root. It's sad but true, but certain policymakers are advocating even stronger support of the Burmese military rulers because they think Thailand's interests and security would be best preserved.

Thailand is at the cross-roads now. It is not too late to acknowledge the legitimacy of the NLD and give full consideration when formulating a more realistic policy toward Burma that recognizes the aspirations of the democracy-loving generation.

Call To Sanction 'Pariah' Clique

ASIAWEEK: November 9, 1990

Take a moment to salute Aung Shwe. Who is this unsung hero? Aung Shwe is the latest in a line of spokesmen for Burma's National League for Democracy. Salute him because as each new person steps into the post, he gets locked up. The National league for Democracy, as everyone except Burma's military well remembers, won the may 27 election. And not just won, but trounced army-backed candidates in a landslide. But since virtually every leader of the league is behind bars, Aung Shwe (if he is still free) is in effect spokesman for the people of Burma. Aung San Suu kyi, the prime minister-elect, and senior leader Tin U have been under house arrest for more then a year. Recently, acting chairman Kyi Maung, secetary Chit Khaing and other key committee members were arrested.

In control of Burma is SLORC. This menacing acronym (for State Law & Order Restoration Council) seems particularly apt for the sinister junta that most Burmese call the Gang of 20 (the council's nineteen members plus New Win, the shadowy dictator). They speak for nobody but themselves. There is on longer the slightest justification, if there ever was any, for believing that Burma is on a slow but measured path towards multi-party democracy. Every last shred of credibility that still clung to SLORC while it delayed the process of handing over has now evaporated. A two month period for poll complaints has long since expired. So has a 75-day deadline for submitting election expenses. The junta maintains that democracy must await a new constitution approved by referendum. But the constitutional convention has yet to meet and anyone who might help write an honest charter is in jail. A recent assault on Buddhist monks protesting the cynical temporising surely demonstrates that the regime is at

odds with the people.

Indeed, the government of Burma is utterly without legitimacy. It is clique of usurpers and ought to be treated as a pariah in the community of nations. Recent world history is full of injustice and fraudulence, but surely there has never been anything as blatant as this denial of so clear an electoral mandate. In 1988, when the military brutally put down a pro-democracy movement, several nations suspended aid. Later it is time for something tougher. In a word: Sanctions. Burma should be in the same category as South Africa. After 28 years of a strange and sterile form of socialism, Burma has to import virtually every manufactured item the government needs, all the spare parts for the army and technology and equipment for the oil industry. Yet foreign trade hardly affects ordinary people deliberately deprived for so long of the economic development that was their due. So sanctions could be targeted to hurt only the villains. The alternative is a grim spiral of protests, arrests and bloodshed.



'HELL' OF A PRICE TO PAY

It has always been the practice of the military junta to give an excuse as to why it has perpetrated a certain crime against the people. But the latest one regarding the crackdown on Buddhist monks takes the cake. One key SLORC commander involved in suppressing monks in Mandalay was Major General Tun Kyi, commander of the Central Command. His reasoning for the suppression according to Rangoon Radio was: "I'd do anything to promote religion even if it means I have to go to hell for it." You figure that out.

Norway's Rafto Foundation Honors Aung San Suu Kyi

The Rafto Foundation of Norway has named Daw Aung San Suu Kyi the winner of the Rafto Human Rights Award for 1990. Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, secretary general of the National League for Democracy which won the May elections by a landslide, continues to be the most popular leader in Burma despite being under house arrest since July 20 1989.

Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's two sons and their grandmother were at the award presentation ceremony to accept the prize on her behalf.

The Rafto Foundation commended Daw Aung San Suu Kyi as someone representative and responsible for the growth of the democratic movement in her country.

The Amnesty International released a special report on November 6, 1990 saying the Burmese military junta has turned the country into a secret state of terror where arrests and torture are commonplace.

The London-based human rights organisation described Burma as a country where the people live in a climate of fear, knowing that any criticism of the junta risks immediate arrest by the military.

"Thousands of people have been shot dead by soldiers, gunned down in back streets or in back alleys," the organization said.

"The military arrest people anywhere - in homes, buses, cafes -and have relentlessly tortured government critics. Hundreds of people have simply vanished into the prison system," it added.

The report of more than 70 pages was one of the most damning indictments yet against the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC), which seized power in a bloody coup in September 1988 in which thousands of people were killed.

The Amnesty report came as a special envoy for the United Nations Human

Junta Turning Country into State of Terror

Rights Commission, Sadako Ogata, arrived in Burma to prepare a report on the country's alleged human rights violations. The UN Human Rights Commission strongly criticized the junta's human rights record in February.

Diplomats added that if Mrs. Ogata's final report was critical, it could be used along with the scathing Amnesty International report as the basis for a call by United Nations members to impose sanctions against Burma.

The Amnesty report also claimed that the authorities were killing anti-government protestors urging a handover of power to the National League for Democracy.

"In recent months soldiers have killed monks involved in protest demonstrations and there has been a wave of arrests of leading opposition figures and members-

elect of the parliament," Amnesty said.

The organization catalogued a systematic campaign to destroy the NLD by arresting its leaders and terrifying its supporters. It said that many people had been tortured simply to punish them for their involvement with the democracy movement.

The amnesty report highlighted several cases of torture including the case of 26-year-old former soldier Myo Myint who lost his right arm below the elbow, his right leg below the knee and all the fingers of his left hand during military operations near the Chinese border in 1987.

When he left the Army, Myo Myint became an NLD activist and was arrested by military intelligence who interrogated him under torture. "They tied him up by his valid arm to the cell

window bars with a pair of handcuffs, kicked him with combat boots and punched him," the Amnesty report quoted a relative as saying.

Another example of the Amnesty's charges of brutality against the junta was the case of a 15-year-old boy who died after being tortured.

According to the report, the teenager, severely burned when a car was set on fire during a student demonstration, was taken from Rangoon General Hospital by security police.

Twenty-four hours later the boy was delivered to Insein Prison.

"When a doctor examined him he discovered that both his upper limbs, from fingers up to the elbow, and lower limbs from toes to knees had been fractured many times.

"His bones had been systematically fractured several times, broken into pieces," said a medical worker in the prison interviewed by Amnesty.

The organization said that when people were arrested and charged they appeared

before military tribunals it described as unfair.

"Martial law provides these tribunals with absolute authority in political cases and strips defendants of important rights," Amnesty charged.

"The judicial system has been reduced to an assembly line feeding Myanmar's (Burma's) prisons," it said.

"It is now time to lift the veil of secrecy and show the rest of the world how fundamental rights are being trampled on everyday in Myanmar," the organization concluded.

Directives Tell of Trouble Facing

● A directive issued to its frontline units during the third week of October by the military government's 28th Infantry Regiment based in Hlaingbwe reveals the extent of problems the government Army is facing.

The directive reads: **"There has been frequent cases of soldiers at the frontline going on AWOL's, committing suicides and dying from sickness. New recruits have been receiving improper or less than the regular training at the training schools. Platoon and company commanders should take extra care to prevent similar cases from occurring again among these new recruits."**

● Another serious problem in the SLORC Army, particularly among officers, is drink-

Govt Army

king. On 22 October, the No. 3 Tactical Operations Command under the 66th Light Infantry Division sent the following message to its 11th, 14th, 75th, and 16th Infantry Regiments.

The message reads: **"Severe action to the extent of dismissal from the Army is being taken against excessive drinking among officers in the division. Hence, officers in the said regiments who engage in excessive drinking should show consideration and submit their resignations voluntarily."**

Bringing Joy to 'Kanni'

Dedicated to the young 'barefoot doctors' – AYE AYE, Minthamee Camp

Even in my deepest sleep I could always sense that morning was coming. And this morning wasn't different from the others. The night was still but I knew the first rays of light were coming soon. Monsoon had been with us for some months now and sunlight is always a welcome after a soggy night. I sat up slowly on my hammock, not wanting to disturb the others. I still have a few minutes to tend to the wound on my leg. It still hurts; it has been that way for some weeks now. I hurt myself going through the thickets. It wouldn't be as bad if we had enough medicines but we have to think about the villagers first. I can see to my wound when we get back to the base camp.

It has been three nights now that we've been camping on a hillock an hour's walk from Migyaung-laung village. We were to provide medical care and carry out rural development work there. The villagers have told us that some government soldiers were in their village searching for student "rebels". But they're leaving today and we're going



in.

Kanni will be happy to see me again. He's nine years old. It took some time and a little funny sketch of him before I could befriend him. He had been suspicious of all uniformed people since his father was taken away by government soldiers. The father never returned after a trip as a porter. Kanni and I, we are friends now. He considers someone wearing the "Fighting Peacock" emblem as his "Ah Ma," sister, or "Ah Ko," brother. I have

a surprise for him. A Thai comic book. As usual he'll be full of questions.

We were the first real teachers and "doctors" the villagers had, and they've been grateful. Our 12-member unit has helped do the odd jobs for the elderly, taught lessons to children, given first aid treatment and cured sick villagers.

But so much work remain. At times we feel helpless but we have to keep trying. They have nothing better than us – the proud "Fighting Peacocks."

NLD Organizer Dies During Interrogation

An organizer of Burma's largest political party, National League for Democracy (NLD), has died in a military detention centre in the capital, diplomats in Rangoon reported on November 11.

U Maung Ko, 52, an organizer for the NLD was arrested on October 24 and his body was returned to the family on November 9.

The man, who was arrested in the Burmese capital during the military junta's latest crackdown on the opposition, is alleged to have committed suicide.

"His family were told that he had committed suicide in the detention centre and that they should come and identify the body," said a diplomat contacted by telephone. The diplomat quoted those who saw the body as saying there was evidence of severe beating and that one leg was broken.

There were no immediate details on how he committed suicide but the leader of the military junta, Saw Maung, said in his speech that he had received a report from the chief of military intelligence, Khin Nyunt, that the man had hanged himself with a blanket in his cell, adding that "this happened because of his own problems."

During a DAWN inquiry, several Burmese dissidents who have had first hand experience at Burmese interrogation centers run by the military intelligence say no one has ever been allowed to have any personal possession during interrogation periods. During the interrogation period which lasts from days to weeks, depending on what the interrogators were trying to find out, "they take away pens, even small slips of paper, and everything they find on you before putting you in a small cell which is entirely bare. They have

never been humane enough to give a blanket to anyone and you can confirm that with anyone who has been inside," said a dissident at the Thai-Burma border.

Sources in the Burmese capital meanwhile say the late U Maung Ko had earlier been considering fleeing the country.

"Only a couple of days before he was picked up he had spoken about fleeing the country and seeking refuge in Thailand. After what has happened it is a tragedy he did not," said one Rangoon-based observer.

News of the death came only days after the London-based human rights organisation Amnesty International released a special report on Burma claiming widespread torture in the detention centres.

Words of 'Wisdom'

Saw Maung who loves to use the phrase, "I know everything," quite often in his speech has this comment about computers:

"What is a computer? It is just silica chips, and chips are just sand."

Watch out Sand ...er Silicon Valley.



THAI STUDENTS RALLY AT BURMESE EMBASSY... Ramkhamhaeng University students gathered in front of the Burmese Embassy in Bangkok on Nov 14 to present a letter to an embassy official, calling on the Burmese military to stop human rights violations.

Burmese Youths Hijack Thai Jet

Two young Burmese hijackers carrying fake bombs commandeered a Thai International plane to the eastern Indian city of Calcutta on November 10.

Reports from India say that after releasing all the passengers the young hijackers told newsmen that they never intended to harm any of the 221 passengers and crew.

"We never wanted to harm anyone. We were sure about that," Ye Mam, one of two students

who hijacked the plane. "That is why we were carrying fake bombs," he added.

Ye Mam was quoted as saying after their surrender to authorities they only wanted to focus attention on the pro-democracy campaign in Burma.

"All that we desired was to invite world attention to our just struggle for democracy in our country. We knew we might die. But we love our country and its democracy-loving people more than anything else," he said.

The hijackers freed all the pas-

sengers and crew of the Thai Airways flight which had taken off from Bangkok destined for Rangoon and surrendered early Nov 11, ending some nine hours of drama at Calcutta's Dum Dum airport.

Ye Mam, 24, and Ye Htin Kyaw, 22, forced the Rangoon bound flight to land in there after claiming they were carrying bombs, which turned out to be soap wrapped in wire.

They first passed over a list of six demands to the Burmese Govt which included the lifting of martial law and the release

'First Class Political Prisoner' Status for Hijackers

India Says No to Extradition Plea

India has turned down a Burmese request to hand over two students who sought political asylum here after hijacking a Thai airliner to Calcutta, Burmese diplomatic sources said in New Delhi.

New Delhi told the embassy in response to the request on November 11 that the two students would be tried under Indian law, the sources said.

"We didn't exactly demand their extradition," a diplomat said. "It was a request. We decided not to press it after the government's response. After all it happened on their (Indian) soil."

The hijackers, Ye Marn and Ye Htin Kyaw, said after the nine-hour drama at Calcutta airport they had wanted to draw world attention to the plight of the Burmese pro-democracy movement under martial law.

They pleaded for political asylum in India, saying they might be sent before the firing squad if they were

extradited to Burma.

New Delhi had no immediate response to the request for asylum by the two, both in their early 20's.

India impounded the hijacked Airbus A-320 and asked the crew to stay back until investigations were completed. Passengers flew back to Bangkok on a relief plane Nov 11.

Officials in the West Bengal State Government which

administers Calcutta said the students, currently detained in a state guest house, would be treated as "first class political prisoners" and not criminals.

A prominent MP from the Communist Party of India-Marxist, Gurudas Dasgupta, urged the Federal Government on November 12 to grant their request for asylum.

"Their actions, however contradictory to international laws and conventions, must be taken into consideration against the background of continued repression of the Burmese people by the barbarous regime in the country which has murdered thousands of people," he said.

Continued from 'Thai Jet Hijacked'

of political prisoners. But in a second message they said that they only wanted to dramatise to the world the plight of the pro-democracy movement in Burma and that they would not blow up the plane or harm the passengers. also quoted one of the hijackers as saying, "like most Burmese we are Fighting Peacocks who are ready to make any sacrifice for restoring democracy and human rights in our country reeling under the oppression of the military."

In Calcutta, capital of Marxist-ruled West Bengal state, Indian officials said Ye Marn and Ye Kyaw Htin had been housed in a Government Guest House, "where they would be provided with all facilities."

West Bengal Chief Secretary T.C. Dutta said the state government was awaiting instructions from New Delhi "about follow up measures to be taken against the two."

Army Told To Stop Monks At Border

A top secret directive issued by the SLORC on October 25 to deal with Buddhist monks has come to our hands. It says:

"(1) Following the issuance of SLORC Order No. 6/90 (to crack down on monks), politicians, politically prone monks, and students may abscond to the border using the land, water, and jungle routes.

"(2) All companies and units are to take the steps stated below in dealing with the people under suspicion:

(a) To examine the religious registration cards of monks.

(b) To interrogate lay people with shaved heads.

(c) To make careful body searches of monks and those under suspicion.

(d) In conducting investigations, to note down the monk's name, the monastery he resides in, the patron who ordained the



A Burmese Buddhist monk is carried away by police after a brief peaceful protest in front of the Burmese Embassy in Bangkok recently.

monk, and the name of the abbot of that monastery. The information is to be reported to higher authorities.

- Aid People Face Arrest, Deportation
- Holding Centers for Students, Monks

Thailand Toughens Stance on Aid Groups, Students

International aid workers — including those with the respected United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees — have been threatened with arrest by Thai authorities if they do not stop “secret” cash handouts to dissident Burmese students.

The arrest threat, by the Interior Ministry, comes as a result of the enquiry into the recent hijacking by two Burmese students of a Thai Airways International jetliner.

It has been claimed one of the hijackers was receiving regular financial support from the UNHCR.

“This is a warning. International organizations which give assistance to Burmese students are breaking the law. We may have to arrest them and deport them as *persona nongrata*,” Deputy Permanent Secretary for Interior Chamnan Pojana said.

Thailand was not bound by

any treaty concerning the UNHCR’s assistance to Burmese asylum seekers in Thailand, he said.

Mr Chamnan said: “We understand that the UNHCR is bound by its humanitarian

duty to provide the assistance. But we have territorial integrity to protect. There is always a limit to humanitarianism,” he said.

Mr Chamnan said that apart from the hijack last week and

Thailand in Gas Project With Burma

Burma is interested in Thai proposals for gas exploration in Martaban and transnational gas pipeline project.

The Petroleum Authority of Thailand said Burma had asked for more details on the proposals for consideration by end November.

A preliminary estimate shows that Burma’s Martaban holds a gas reserve of about 6.6 trillion cubic feet, sufficient

for a large-scale commercial development. If the reserve is confirmed by further surveys, the development can take place and the gas can be transmitted through the proposed pipeline which will run across the Thai-Burmese border.

Several countries may participate in both projects, but Thailand says it intends to hold at least 20 percent shares, apart from income under a production sharing scheme. Both projects are estimated to cost about U.S.\$1 billion. The daily output of natural gas must be 250 million cubic feet a day to justify the large investment.

frequent political rallies, it was believed some of the students were responsible for the recent bomb attack on the Burmese Embassy in Bangkok

"We are fully aware of their activity. They cannot engage in this type of political activity as it is against our law," Mr Chamnan said.

"We will have to enforce both the Immigration and the Penal Code against them and deport the violators the same way we are treating other foreign criminals."

The deputy permanent secretary said the meeting agreed to propose to the National Security Council that all Burmese students seeking asylum in Thailand be placed in a holding camp.

They would be issued with identification and be required to seek official permission to come and go at the camp. Special living quarters would also be proposed to house Burmese monks who have also taken refuge in the country.

Mr Chamnan said the Interior Ministry was studying two possible locations in Mae Sot District of Tak and Suan Phuen District of Ratchaburi as venue for the planned camp.

Australia Will Join International Sanctions Against Regime

Australia has said that it will impose economic sanctions against the Burmese military junta if they were part of an international move, Foreign Minister Gareth Evans said in Canberra on November 13.

Addressing the Senate, Evans said the government would continue to call for the establishment of a democratic government in Burma. He said, however, it was unlikely economic sanctions would work without the support of Burma's regional neighbours.

"We would join any broad-based international move to impose economic sanctions, but would wish to evaluate the likely effects of such a move in conjunction with the United States and other like-minded countries," he said.

"Burma's regional trading partners, who account for most of the country's trade, would be unlikely to support these sanctions, at least at this stage."

Evans said the political situation in Burma had deteriorated with the ruling State Law and Order Restoration Council becoming "increasingly dependent on intimidation and repression."

Australia was concerned at a report that one of the leaders of the National League for Democracy, which has not been allowed to take power despite winning overwhelming support at the elections had died while being detained by SLORC, he said.

Ne Win's Son-in-Law Eases Way for Overseas Investors

Ne Win's son-in-law, Aye Zaw Win, has reportedly been helping overseas investors gain access to the country's military junta and start businesses in the country — at a price. He and a former military official has set up Myanmar Consultancy Services supposedly to offer advice to overseas companies.

The actual work of the MCS, if the payment is right, is to use Ne Win's influence to help gain operating licenses for overseas companies.

Reflections

Captivated was I by the scene ...
those plains of green
dappled white by sheets of water
over those hills, way yonder

Faint lines etched by the plains
sew together the jigsaws of life,
the joys, the pains...
slowly, immersed was I in my past

Adrift in those thoughts stood I,
with warmth,
oblivious to
the falling wintry dew

Calls of ye, ye, ye...
disrupt my dreams
realizing only then
of a child nearby

Barely clothed, as if out of courtesy,
in soiled rags, stood this child

with brilliant, yet empty, eyes
How long will the glow last?

Those towering mountains,
untamed forests,
farms abound with lush growths,
abandoned field-keeper's huts,
all but with lost radiance
only sad whispers
of starvation...
disease...
bullets...

Awakened by sudden thoughts,
this poor child of the lush plains and I,
are but the other beats of a heart
made strangers
only by thoughts
of stubborn vengeance,
and ferocity of oppression

Gently his hand was in mine
whispered I,
'Come child, let's go work on the farm.'

HTAY AUNG

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